**St. Dunstan’s Mothers’ Union**

If you believe MU to be a cosy, somewhat dated organisation with its feet firmly set in the past – you couldn’t be more wrong. In our modern world today, MU continues to do all it can to support families and help relationships flourish; I think you’ll agree, this is something very important to us all.

At the end of January, MU CEO, Bev Julien and MU Coventry Diocese Parenting Facilitator, Karen Morris attended a Parliamentary consultation on “Supporting Relationship Education” hosted at Parliament by Fiona Bruce MP.

Karen Morris is currently involved in What Should We Tell the Children about Relationships and Sex? – a programme developed by Coventry University Health Services Research Centre. Mothers’ Union parenting facilitators were amongst those on the steering group and have been the major providers of the programme in Warwickshire.

Karen spoke about the importance of remembering the perspective of parents when looking at Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). “Parents are really concerned that they don’t have the skills to talk to their children about relationships and sex but they also don’t know what is happening at school and what their children are being taught. Karen continued, “The What Should We Tell the Children…. programme that MU is involved in helps empower parents to have ongoing conversations with their children about flourishing relationships and sex. It also builds up a relationship with the child, parent and school so that there is transparency around what the child is being told.”

Bev Julien said after the consultation – “It’s extremely important we are sitting at the table and contributing to such an important discussion. MU members continue to be at the forefront of supporting families and have tremendous insight into what parents are concerned about when it comes to talking to their children about the crucial issues of relationships and sex.”

If you would like to learn more about MU or would like to come along to a meeting, please contact Sally Steele or Beryl Noble – you’d be most welcome.

At our last meeting on Monday, 6th February we held our AGM which was followed by a Bring and Buy Sale. During the meeting, our Secretary, Beryl Noble and Treasurer, Sally Steele together with all committee members agreed to stay on for a further year. A big thank you to those who brought and bought goods in the sale and I’m pleased to say we took a whopping £74 which will go towards the cost of “treats” for members at some of the celebratory events we are planning during this important centenary year.

Coming up in our programme: we are hosting one of the parish’s Lent Study Groups. The meetings will be held each Monday afternoon on 19th February, 26th February, 5th, 12th and 19th March in the church hall beginning at 2.00 pm. If you would like to take part, there is a sign-up sheet at the back of the church and for more information, please contact Marianne Adams.

On Mothering Sunday, the 11th March – MU will be providing small bunches of spring flowers for children to give to their mothers or carers at the 9.30 am service. In the church hall after the service, there will be home-made traditional simnel cake and small cakes for the children as well as tea, coffee and squash.

On Monday, 4th June as part of our centenary celebrations, we are planning a coach trip to Mary Sumner’s house in Old Arlesford in Hampshire. Depending on final numbers, we are hoping to keep the cost of the coach fare at around £15-£20 a head. Please see Sally Steele for more information. Do hope you can join us, it looks like being a lovely day out.

**Sue Wass**